



FIRST STEPS BRIDAL

First Steps To Your First Dance

The Wedding Dance Planner

Hey Lovers,

For over 12 years, I've had the joy of helping couples craft their wedding dances, and it's been an incredible journey. I created this planner specifically for those who might not know where to begin. It's filled with insights and guidance drawn from my experiences with hundreds of couples in my lessons, making it perfect for everyone—whether you're taking classes or planning on your own.

This planner will help you navigate all the important elements needed for a comfortable, beautiful, and stress-free wedding dance. My hope is to give every couple the opportunity to create a magical moment on the dance floor, one that reflects your love and connection. Together, let's make your first dance a cherished memory!

Soph xx





So.... Where Do We Start?

- What's the vibe?
 - My gift is my song. and this ones for you.
 - The dance floor.
 - How long does this thing last?
 - Don't trip on that.
 - Heels or flats?
 - When do we do this thing?
 - What's actually important.
- 



What's The Vibe?

Choosing a vibe for your wedding dance is crucial because it sets the tone for one of the most memorable moments of your special day. Whether you envision a romantic slow dance, an upbeat and energetic routine, or even a fun mash-up, the vibe you select reflects your unique love story and personality as a couple. It's not just about the steps you take; it's about creating an atmosphere that resonates with you and your guests, making the experience truly unforgettable. Plus, having a clear vibe in mind can help guide your song selection, choreography, and even the way you interact on the dance floor, ensuring you both feel comfortable and confident as you celebrate your love together.

Here are some of the vibes I've gotten from couples when describing their first dance to help get you started.

Romantic 1950's love story

Think Tuxedos, red roses, At Last by Etta James, Nostalgia, Kissing in the rain, Audrey Hepburn.

End scene of a romantic comedy

This one is party, energetic, friends and family involvement, glow sticks and other props, big statement lift for maximum cheers!

Simple and Elegant

Romantic acoustic cover song, moments of pause, family and friends wiping away tears, fluid transitions.





Choosing The Vibe

Write down what you envision when you think about your wedding dance. Colours, themes, scenes from movies, anything that will help you decide what the right vibe is for your day.





Your song

Selecting the perfect song for your wedding dance is a thrilling part of your big day, setting the mood and reflecting your unique love story. With so many choices available, it can be overwhelming, but these tips will help you find the ideal tune for your first dance, ensuring it's as memorable as your love!

Reflect On Your Relationship:

Pick a song that has special meaning to you as a couple. Whether it's your first song, a favorite tune from a shared memory, or lyrics that resonate with your love story, let it capture your unique bond.

Consider the Vibe:

Think about the atmosphere you want to create. Do you envision a romantic, slow dance, or a fun, upbeat number? The vibe will influence not just the song choice but also your choreography.

Test It Out:

Play your top choices together and see how you both feel. Dance around your living room! Sometimes, the right song just feels right when you hear it together.

Look for Lyrics That Matter:

Pay attention to the lyrics. Choose a song that expresses your feelings and intentions for your marriage, ensuring the message aligns with your love story. Make sure to listen all the way to the end of the song to avoid nasty surprises.

Explore Different Genres:

Don't limit yourself to traditional wedding songs. Explore various genres—jazz, rock, pop, or even a classic love song—to find something that truly resonates with you. Search “wedding dance playlists” on spotify or apple music for other couple's songs to help spark inspiration.

Ask for Help:

If you're feeling stuck, don't hesitate to seek recommendations from friends, family, or even a wedding planner. Sometimes, a fresh perspective can make the decision that much easier.



Choosing your song

Start by each making a list of songs that you think might be the perfect fit. Sit down together, listen to each one, and cross out the ones that don't resonate—keep an open mind! For the remaining songs, get up and dance; circle the ones that feel right. Aim to narrow your list down to three favorites. Over the next few days, listen to each one again while envisioning your wedding day to help you choose the ultimate song. If you're still having trouble deciding, don't hesitate to share your top picks with your most trusted friends for their feedback!

My List

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Your List

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Top Three

Our Wedding Song: _____

The Dance Floor

When it comes to your wedding, the dance floor is where the magic happens!

It's the space where you and your guests will create unforgettable memories, celebrating love and joy through dance. To ensure your dance floor is a hit, there are several important factors to consider. From the location and size to the ambiance and safety, each element plays a crucial role in setting the perfect scene for your celebration. Here are some key things to think about as you plan your wedding dance floor, helping you create an experience that everyone will remember!

Location & Accessibility:

Consider the entrance to the dance floor and ensure that the path is clear and easy to navigate, especially during your wedding dance. A well-placed dance floor encourages guests to participate and keeps the celebration flowing smoothly.

Size & Surface:

Choose a dance floor that's appropriately sized, providing enough space for you and your guests to move comfortably. A smooth, level surface is essential, particularly if you plan on incorporating lifts or inviting others to join in the fun.

Lighting & Ambiance:

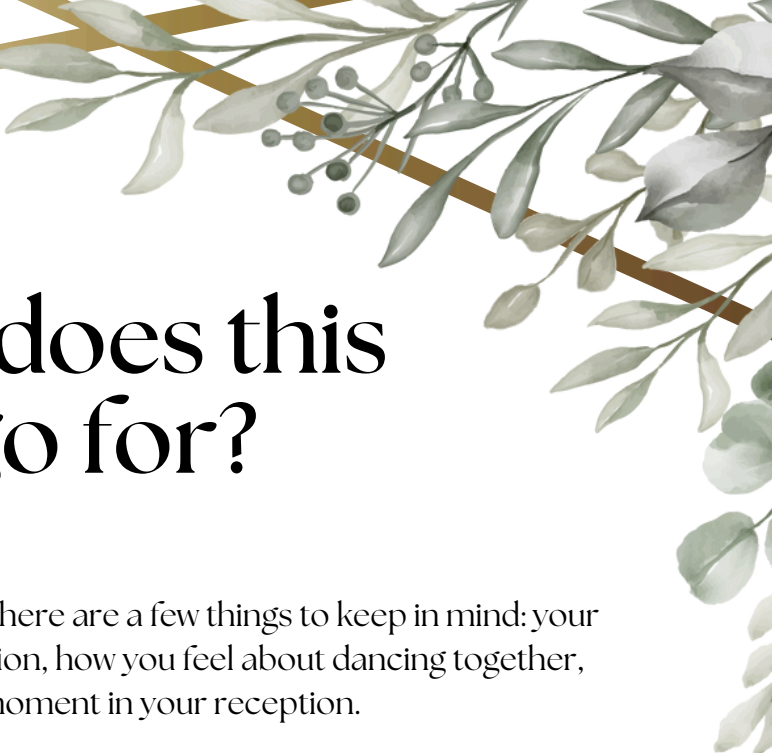
Set the right mood for your dance floor with lighting that complements your vision, whether you want a romantic atmosphere or a vibrant party vibe. Thoughtful lighting design enhances the overall experience and encourages everyone to hit the dance floor.

Our Dance Floor

Dimensions:

Layout sketch:





How long does this thing go for?

The short answer? It's entirely up to you! But there are a few things to keep in mind: your comfort level with being the center of attention, how you feel about dancing together, and the significance of this moment in your reception.

Many couples think the length of their song dictates how long they need to dance, but there are several ways to adjust that. If you have a musician playing live, don't hesitate to ask them to tailor their version to your preferred length—maybe a gentle fade out after a particular move or an extended intro.

My top tip for live performances? Request that your musician record it during a rehearsal; a simple voice memo on your phone is perfect for practicing your dance to the exact version you'll hear on the big day.

For pre-recorded songs, editing can be done by your DJ, your wedding dance instructor, or even yourself if you're feeling adventurous with some YouTube tutorials on music editing. There are also companies that specialize in editing music for dance routines.

My top tip here is to have it professionally edited—nothing disrupts the magic like a jarring cut in the music!

Our Dance

Music will be played:

Live

Pre recorded

Edits we need to our song:





Don't Trip On That

Considering your wedding attire before planning your dance is essential for several reasons. First, the style and silhouette of your dress or suit can significantly impact your movement; for instance, a ball gown with a long train might restrict certain dance moves or require extra care while dancing, pants with little to no stretch will make lifts or dips a little more tricky.

Additionally, the weight and fabric of your attire can affect your comfort level during the dance, so it's wise to practice in your attire or a similar style to see how it feels. Lastly, thinking about your clothing choice can help you select a dance style that complements its design, ensuring that your movements enhance both the dance and the overall look you want to showcase on your special day.

Things to think about

Are you planning to switch up your wedding attire from the ceremony to the reception? A little outfit change can mean new options for what you can do in your dance.

Do you need to consider a bustle or wrist hook for those long dresses?
Will you be removing your veil and other accessories before the dance?

What will we wear for our dance

Me

You

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Any alterations that need to be made:

.....

.....

.....



Heels or Flats?

Choosing the right wedding shoes is essential for ensuring you feel fabulous and ready to dance the night away. Here are some key considerations to keep in mind as you select the perfect pair for your wedding dance.

Heel Height

Consider the heel height that you can comfortably dance in. While a little height can enhance your look, make sure you can move freely and confidently without wobbling or risking a fall.

Traction Matters

Check the sole of your shoes for traction. Smooth soles might look chic but can be slippery on the dance floor, so opt for shoes with a bit of grip to prevent any unexpected tumbles. Check out my top tips at the end of the planner for how to help with slippery shoes.

Breaking Them In:

Be sure to practice dancing in your shoes—not only to get a feel for them but also to help prevent blisters and identify any trouble spots. This way, you can tackle those areas with a gel insert or a strategically placed band-aid before the big day!

Backup Options

Consider bringing a second pair of shoes for the reception. A stylish yet comfortable option, like a chic flat or a fun pair of sneakers, can give you more confidence in your dance if heels aren't your usual choice of footwear.

Our Reception Shoes

Me

You



When do we do this thing?

Ultimately, the decision is entirely yours when it comes to your first dance. Some couples prefer to dive right in, heading straight to the dance floor as they enter the reception, while others like to use their first dance to signal the start of the evening's festivities and conclude any formalities. Additionally, it's important to consider the timing of other special dances, such as the father/daughter and mother/son dances, if you plan to include those in your wedding celebration.

Things to consider;

How will you enter the dancefloor, what will you be doing right before the first dance?

Do you need your MC to make an announcement so your friends and family move to the dancefloor to watch or are they staying seated?

If you're planning a father/daughter or mother/son dance, think about how this will flow after your first dance concludes. Will you exit the floor to bring them up or would you like them to approach you at the end of your dance?

If you're kicking off the dance floor, consider how to signal to your family and friends that it's time to join in—will you give them a cue or have the MC make an announcement?

Do you want to open the dance floor exclusively to your bridal party and their partners or invite everyone to join in on the fun together?





What's actually important

It's essential to think about what really matters to you when it comes to your wedding dance. Are you looking to have a blast and get your friends cheering? Or perhaps you want an intimate moment just for the two of you? Maybe it's simply a formality that doesn't require too much fuss. By identifying your priorities, you can better tailor your dance experience to reflect your personalities and relationship, ensuring it aligns with what you truly want from this special moment.

Understanding what's truly important will guide your decisions about the routine and help you determine how much effort you want to invest in creating that memorable experience. If having fun and entertaining your guests is a priority, you might opt for lively choreography that encourages everyone to join in. Conversely, if you envision a romantic and tender moment, you may choose a slower, more intimate dance that allows you to connect on a deeper level. Knowing your focus can help streamline your planning process and alleviate any unnecessary stress.

Remember, while the dance may only take a few minutes out of your day, it represents a unique opportunity to share a heartfelt experience together. You'll find yourselves alone on the dance floor, surrounded by family and friends, all there to witness and celebrate your love. This is a chance to create unforgettable memories that will last a lifetime, so embrace it and enjoy every moment!



So.... where do we start?

Checklist

The Vibe

- ☐ Write down key words and ideas for our wedding dance vibe
- ☐ Choose our wedding dance vibe

The Dance Floor

- ☐ Find out what our dance floor is made from
- ☐ Decide on the dimensions of the dance floor

Our Attire

- ☐ Decide what we will wear for reception
- ☐ Contact dress maker/designer for any adjustments that need to be made to attire for dance
- ☐ Decide on what accessories to remove for dance and who will hold them/ where they will be stored.

Timing

- ☐ Decide when we will do the wedding dance
- ☐ Plan how the wedding dance will start/be announced
- ☐ Plan what will happen after the wedding dance is over.

Our Song

- ☐ Make our shortlists of songs
- ☐ Listen to the list and narrow down favourites
- ☐ Dance to the shortlist and choose three.
- ☐ Send our final three to family and friend for feedback
- ☐ Choose our wedding dance song

The Length

- ☐ Decide on how long the dance will be
- ☐ Decide on any edits that need to be made to song
- ☐ Contact DJ/Dance Instructor/Music Editor for edits to be made for song
- ☐ Contact Musician for edits and to request a recorded version

Footwear

- ☐ Decide what shoes will be worn for wedding dance.
- ☐ Break in shoes to see what adjustments need to be considered
- ☐ Purchase backup shoes to dance in.

What's Important

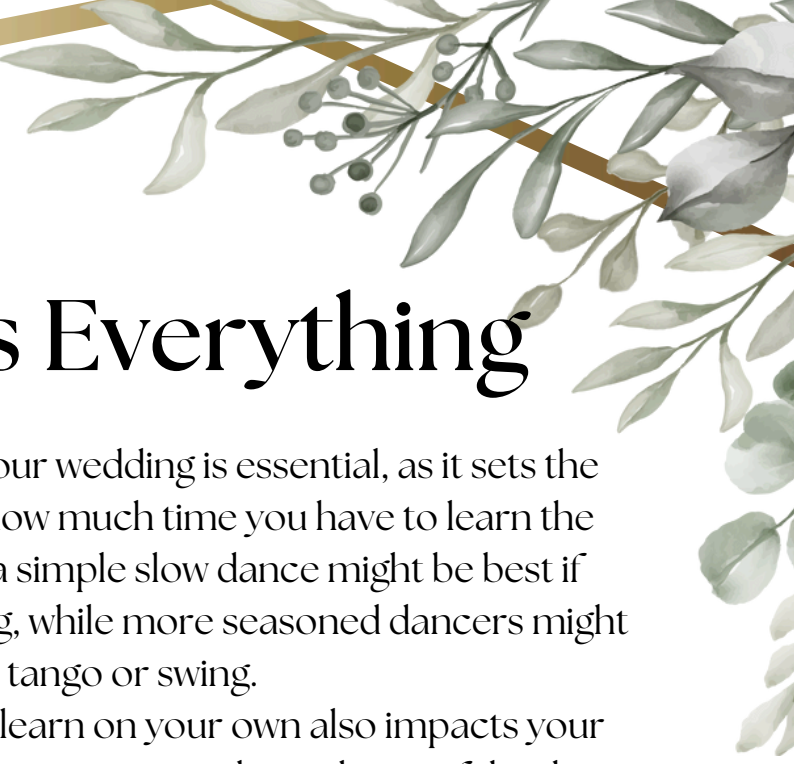
- ☐ Decide what is important to you for the first dance.



Got The Basics... What's Next?

- Your style is everything
- Make a statement
- How do we do this?
- Date night!





Your Style Is Everything

Choosing the right dance style for your wedding is essential, as it sets the tone for the celebration. Consider how much time you have to learn the routine and your experience level; a simple slow dance might be best if you're short on time or new to dancing, while more seasoned dancers might enjoy tackling a tango or swing.

Whether you plan to take lessons or learn on your own also impacts your choice. Lessons can help you explore more complex styles confidently, whereas self-taught dancers might want to stick with something manageable. Don't forget to think about the vibe you want to create—your dance should reflect the atmosphere you envision for your special day. A well-chosen style can make your wedding dance a truly memorable moment!

Here are my suggested timelines based on your choice of dance style, for absolute beginners.

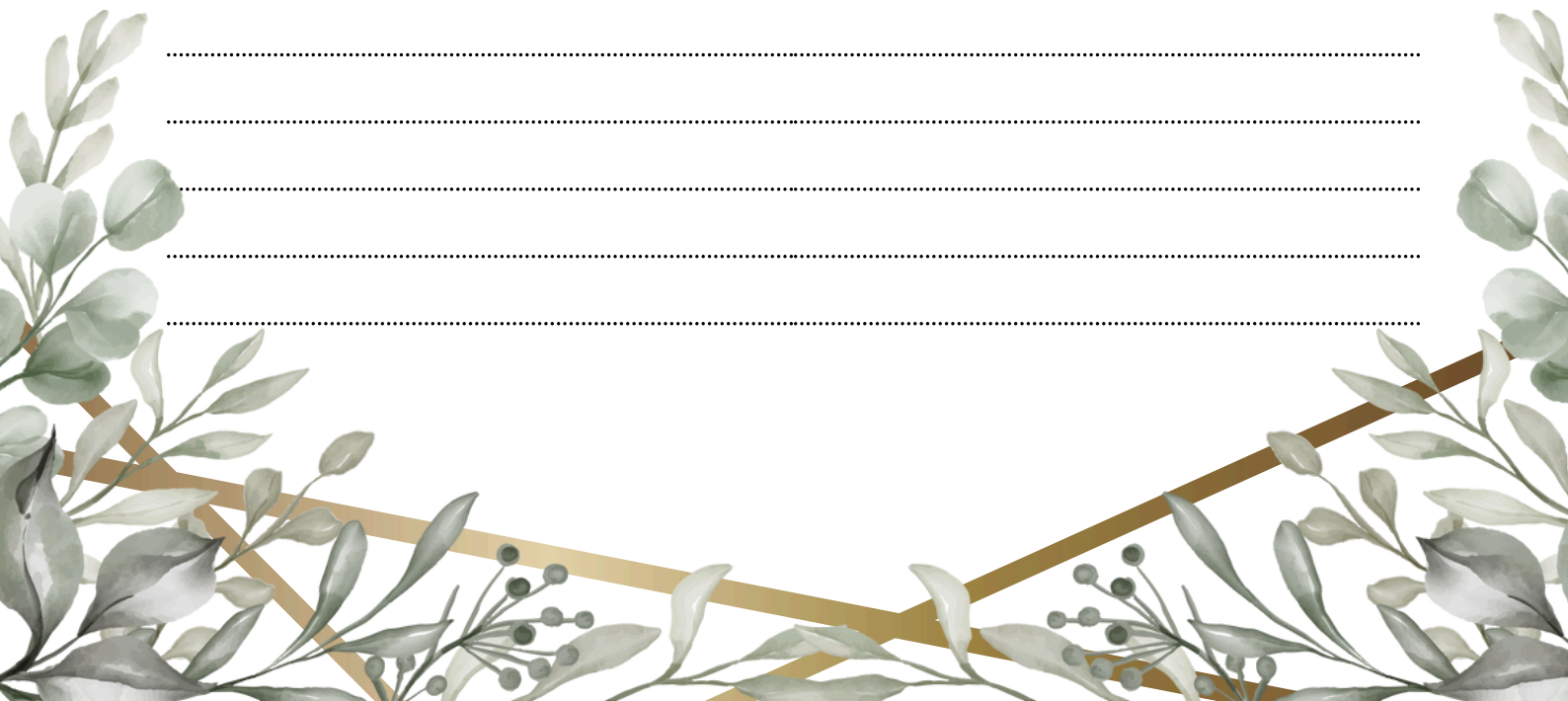
<i>Style</i>	<i>With Lessons</i>	<i>Self Taught</i>
Basic Waltz/Foxy	2-3 months out	4-6 months out
Latin Inspired	4-6 months out	6-8 months out
Country Swing/Line dance	4-6 months out	6-8 months out
Full Choreography (any style)	6-12 months out	8-12 months out

Make A Statement

Making a statement in your wedding dance with a dip or lift can truly wow your guests and create a memorable moment. These dramatic movements add flair and excitement, leaving a lasting impression on everyone watching. However, it's essential to consider your own abilities and strengths, as well as the limitations of your attire on the day. A ball gown may look beautiful, but it could restrict your movements, so be mindful of how your outfit will affect any complex maneuvers you have in mind.

Getting creative by browsing social media for inspiration can spark ideas for your own dance routine. Watching how other couples incorporate dips, lifts, or other show-stopping moves can help you visualize what might work for you. If you're drawn to a more complex move, it's wise to invest in lessons with a professional instructor. This not only helps you master the technique but also ensures your safety, reducing the risk of injury on your big day. With the right preparation and a little creativity, you can create a breathtaking dance that reflects your personality and leaves your guests in awe!

Our statement move ideas



How Do We Do This?

The first decision you'll want to tackle is whether you're up for taking lessons or prefer to go the DIY route. Both options have their perks and pitfalls, so weigh your choices wisely!

Below are my pros and cons list for both.

Taking Wedding Dance Lessons

Pro's

- **Expert Guidance:** A professional instructor can provide valuable tips and techniques, helping you learn the right steps and style tailored to your dance.
- **Boosted Confidence:** Learning with a pro can ease pre-wedding jitters, giving you the skills and confidence to shine on the dance floor.
- **Customized Routine:** Lessons allow for a personalized dance routine that reflects your unique style as a couple, making your first dance even more special.
- **Connection Time:** Taking lessons together can strengthen your bond as you work toward a common goal and enjoy the process of learning.
- **Injury Prevention:** Professional guidance helps ensure that you practice safely, reducing the risk of injury during your big moment.

Cons:

- **Cost:** Dance lessons can add to your wedding budget, which might be a consideration if you're already stretched financially.
- **Time Commitment:** Finding time to schedule lessons can be challenging, especially with all the other wedding planning on your plate.
- **Pressure to Perform:** Some couples might feel additional pressure to perfect their routine, which could turn the fun into a stressor.

If you choose to take lessons, be sure to do your research. Look for an instructor who is professional, knowledgeable, and great with beginners!

Pro's

- **Cost-Effective:** Learning at home can save you money since you won't have to pay for dance lessons or an instructor.
- **Flexibility:** You can practice whenever it fits your schedule, allowing for a more relaxed approach to learning without the pressure of scheduled classes.
- **Personal Style:** You have the freedom to choose your own style and routine, creating a dance that truly reflects your personality as a couple.
- **Shared Experience:** Learning together at home can be a fun bonding activity, allowing you to enjoy quality time while preparing for your big day.

Cons:

- **Lack of Professional Guidance:** Without an instructor, you might miss out on important techniques or corrections, leading to less polished performance.
- **Limited Feedback:** It can be challenging to assess your progress or technique without an outside perspective.
- **Motivation Challenges:** Staying disciplined and motivated to practice regularly can be tough without the structure of formal lessons.
- **Potential for Frustration:** If you encounter difficulties, it can be easy to feel stuck or frustrated without professional support to guide you through challenges.
- **Safety Concerns:** Learning complex moves at home without proper instruction increases the risk of injury, especially if you're trying to incorporate lifts or dips.

Avoid spending hundreds on online lessons featuring pre-choreographed routines from professional dancers. While they may seem straightforward, it's best to choose a company that specifically caters to beginners!

Do It Yourself



Date Night aka Practice Time

Practicing is absolutely essential for nailing your wedding dance, and here's a little secret: consistency trumps those long, grueling sessions every time! Instead of stressing over every little detail, try to carve out regular, shorter practice times. This way, you can keep the momentum going without feeling overwhelmed.

To make it even more enjoyable, turn your practice sessions into fun date nights (or days). Set the scene by ordering in your favorite food and opening a bottle of something you both love. Create a cozy atmosphere where you can let loose and dance like no one's watching! This approach not only helps you work on your moves but also gives you the chance to connect and share some laughs. Embrace the silly moments—maybe you'll fumble a step or two, but those little mishaps often turn into the best memories.

Once you're feeling confident in your moves, it's time to show them off! Take your skills out for a spin at a party or another event—nothing like a little public practice to get comfortable with eyes on you.

Remember, the goal is to enjoy the time together and build your confidence as a couple. So, don't take it too seriously! The more you enjoy the process, the more natural and comfortable you'll feel on the big day. Plus, when the music starts playing at your wedding, those fun practice sessions will shine through, making your dance a beautiful reflection of your relationship!



If your practice isn't going as planned, walk away and take a breather! Often, it's not the dance that's the problem—it's just that pesky stress from the day hanging around. A little break can work wonders!



Got The Basics.... What's Next?

Checklist

The Style

- ☐ Choose a style for the wedding dance
- ☐ Decide how long before the wedding we should start learning the dance.

Dance Lessons

- ☐ Decide if we are having lessons or teaching ourselves
- ☐ Research wedding dance lessons (in person and online)
- ☐ Book in for lessons or set aside time to learn

Statements

- ☐ Scroll through social for some inspiration of statement moves
- ☐ Decide how many statement moves to include.
- ☐ Short list our favourite statement moves to learn.

Date Nights

- ☐ Schedule in regular time for practice.



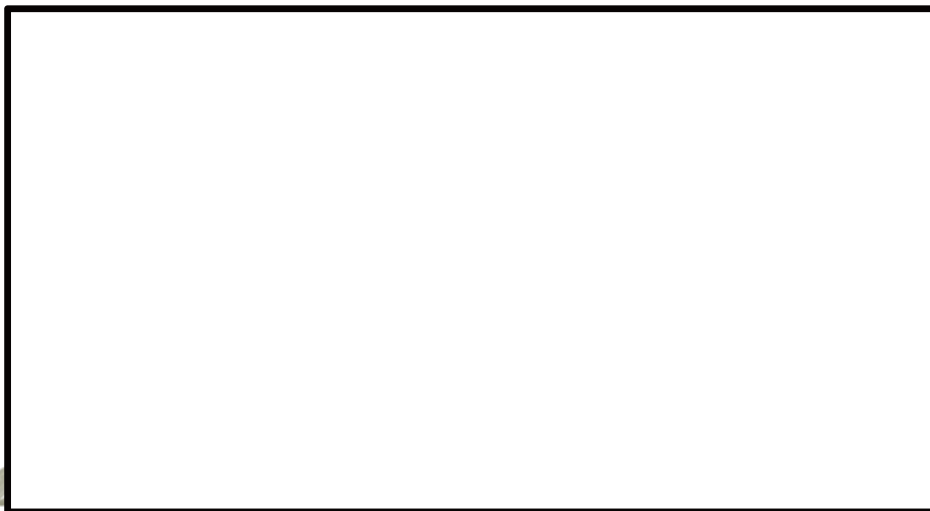
Our Wedding Dance

Alright, lovebirds! This is the spot to jot down all your dazzling decisions for the wedding dance. Whether you're going for a classic twirl or a wild spin, get it all down here so you don't forget any of your fabulous plans. Let's make sure your dance floor debut is nothing short of legendary!

The Vibe

Song Choice

Dance Floor





Our Reception Attire

Plan For Before and After Wedding Dance

What Is Most Important





Our Dance Style

Date To Start Lessons

Statement Moves We Want To Include

-
-
-
-
-
-

Lesson Details





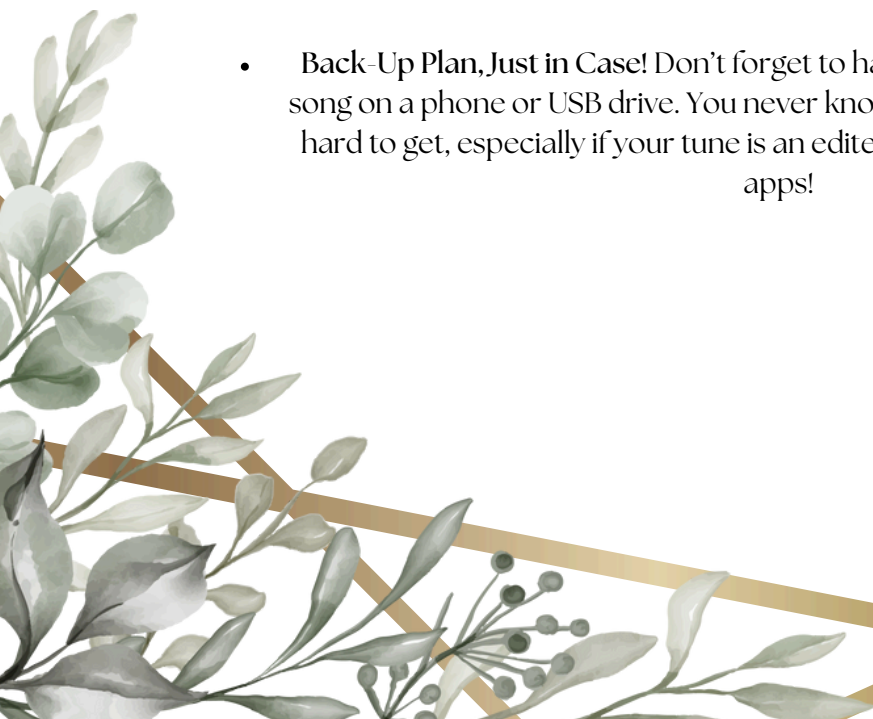
Date Night Schedule





Wedding Dance Advice

Before The Day

- **Dress Rehearsal, Anyone?** Get comfy in something that resembles your wedding day attire. While you can't exactly reveal your wedding dress or suit to your partner, why not get creative with a blanket to mimic a skirt?
 - **Roll with the Punches!** Once you've nailed your wedding dance routine, embrace those little hiccups. On the big day, things might go sideways, but knowing you can adapt together is half the fun!
 - **Picture Perfect Moments!** For those special snapshots you want, hold those poses for a solid count of three. Give your photographer a fighting chance to capture the magic!
 - **Face the Crowd!** Practice turning towards your friends and family during those spotlight moments. Trust us, they'll appreciate not seeing your back!
 - **Communication is Key!** Remembering all those moves can be tricky, so chat it up on the day. It'll boost your confidence and help keep your expressions lively for those candid shots.
 - **Keep it Steady!** If locking eyes with your partner feels a bit daunting, find a spot just behind them to glance at occasionally. This way, it'll look like you're gazing into their eyes while giving your peepers a little breather!
 - **Back-Up Plan, Just in Case!** Don't forget to have a backup of your wedding song on a phone or USB drive. You never know when technology might play hard to get, especially if your tune is an edited version that's MIA on music apps!
- 



Wedding Dance Advice

On The Day

- **Dance Like Nobody's Watching!** Get some practice in while you're out taking photos. It's the perfect opportunity to rock those wedding clothes and score some stunning shots at the same time!
 - **Slippery Shoes, No Problem!** If your kicks are giving you a slippery scare, try crosshatching the soles with scissors. If that feels a bit extreme, a few layers of hairspray can add some much-needed grip—just let them dry completely before you strut your stuff!
 - **Double the Tape, Double the Fun!** Double-sided tape is a lifesaver for those pesky open-back shoes that just won't stay put. For extra comfort, run some clear tape along the insole and secure any straps. Your feet will thank you!
 - **Embrace the Oops!** Remember, those little mistakes are what make the dance unforgettable. You'll share a laugh and keep going—after all, you've practiced handling them like pros!
 - **Breathe and Remember!** Right before you hit the dance floor, take a deep breath with your partner. Reflect on what you want this moment to be—it's all about the vibe!
- 

Happily Ever After

As you embark on this exciting journey to your first dance, remember that every step is a reflection of your unique love story. This planner is your trusted companion, guiding you through each stage—from choosing the perfect song to mastering your dance on the day. Embrace the process, share the joy with your partner, and don't forget to sprinkle in a little fun along the way!

With each practice, you'll build not only your dance skills but also lasting memories that you'll cherish forever. So, take a deep breath, trust in yourselves, and let your love shine on that dance floor. Here's to a beautiful wedding dance that captures the essence of your relationship—a moment you'll look back on with a smile for years to come.



www.firststepsbridallessons.com